

The purpose of this contest is to celebrate the life teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and to encourage Rhode Island students in Grade 8 to think critically about, personally connect with, and be challenged by his legacy of nonviolence.



Rhode Island 8th Grade

Gandhi Essay Contest 2015–2016

Essay Prompt:

“An eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind.”

Gandhi brought his wife and children from India to South Africa in 1898 on a ship called the Courtland. A crowd of white South Africans protested the ship's arrival and threatened violence to the dark-skinned immigrant passengers. When Gandhi disembarked, he was surrounded and violently attacked by the angry mob threatening to lynch him. He narrowly escaped and when asked to identify his attackers so they could be arrested and punished, Gandhi refused.

Throughout his life Gandhi chose love and truth over violence, never retaliating with violence against his attackers. Today, we face numerous problems from gun violence and police shootings to terrorism, war, and refugee problems. Rather than approaching these problems with violent retaliation, Gandhi would choose constructive nonviolence and forgiveness.

Write a personal essay in which you

1. Explain what this quote means to you.
2. Discuss why you think nonviolence is a better solution than violence in solving problems in our communities and worldwide.
3. Discuss how you or students in your school can choose nonviolence rather than violence to solve conflicts.

Who is eligible to participate?

All students in Grade 8 who attend public, private, parochial, or home school programs in Rhode Island.

Awards

All students receive a certificate of participation. Finalists, teachers, and family members are invited to an awards ceremony at the University of Rhode Island's Kingston campus. Multiple winners receive cash prizes: 1st - \$100, 2nd - \$75, 3rd - \$50. Participating teachers receive a classroom poster.

Essay guidelines

See the Center's website for details.

1. The essay complies with TI Common Core Standards. Instructional options for teachers are available on the Center's Contest website.
2. Format—reflective personal essay consistent with the RI Common Core Standards.
3. Essay must be double-spaced, typed, and a maximum of 3 pages (750 words).
4. 12-point font size, 1" margin.
5. MLA format will be used for any in-text citations and for the works cited page. Works cited page is not included in page and word count.

6. Do NOT include names or any identifying information on the essay.

Criteria

Essays will be judged using a scoring rubric (available on Center website) that includes addressing the prompt, presenting descriptive examples, organizing clear ideas, and using grammatically correct language.

Submitting Your Essay

Please mail or deliver one cover page and three copies of your essay to:

Dr. Paul Bueno de Mesquita
Attn: Gandhi Essay Contest
URI Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies
74 Lower College Road
Kingston, RI 02881

Deadline

Essays must be delivered or postmarked no later than **Saturday, January 30, 2016** (Gandhi's assassination date).

Note

All winning essays become property of the contest sponsor.

Sponsors at URI

Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies
University Honors Program
School of Education

Decisions will be announced by Wednesday, May 4, 2016.

For More Information

If you have questions, please email gandhiessay@etal.uri.edu
www.uri.edu/nonviolence/gandhiessay/